(a) whether it is a fact that Government are working to prepare guidelines to Patent gene sequences;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) in what manner this move would help India in preventing others from using some biological material for commercial purposes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) The Patents Act, 1970 and Rules made thereunder provide for appropriate provisions for examination of patent applications, including those involving gene sequences. The Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trade Marks has prepared **a** draft Manual of Patent Practice and Procedures which, *inter alia,* provides for examination guidelines.

SEZs planned for Maharashtra

2971. SHRI VASANT CHAVAN:
SHRI SANJAY RAUT:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
SHRI DATTA MEGHE:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number and details of the special Economic Zones planned and approved for being set up in Maharashtra;

(b) the Central aid sanctioned therefor; and

(c) the progress so far made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) The policy of the Central Government is to encourage and facilitate the Zones being set up in the private sector or joint sector in association with the State Government or by the State Governments themselves. On the basis of the proposals received, approvals have so far been granted for setting up of the following SEZs in Maharashtra in the private/joint/State sector:—

Location	Name of the Developer
Navi Mumbai	City and Industrial Development Corporation of Maharashtra Limited.
Khopta, District	Gujarat Positra Port Infrastructure Limited.

The above projects are reported to be under implementation. The SEZ scheme does not envisage any Central assistance for setting up of new Special Economic Zones.

Economic cooperation with EU

2972. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the European Union (EU) proposes to upgrade economic cooperation with India at par with China;

(b) whether the EU has asked India that it should try to remove the bureaucratic hurdle coming in the way of foreign investment in out country; and

(c) if so, what is the action plan of Government to remove red tape in bureauracy to attract large investment from EU countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) European Union (EU) has upgraded its relationship with India by including it in the select group of six countries with whom EU has Strategic Partnership, the other countries being USA, Russia, China, Japan and Canada.

(b) and (c) In the 5th India-EU Summit held on 8 November, 2004, at the Hague, the Nethelands, the European Union (EU) welcomed the abiding commitment of the Indian Government to economic reforms for stimulating growth, investment and employment. While the EU has not referred to any specific issues affecting the flow of foreign investment to India, India and the EU have agreed to intensify cooperation and take action to facilitate and expand bilateral trade and investment flows. FDI Policy and associated procedures are reviewed on a continuing basis with a view to attract investments.

Formulation of strategies for promoting Indian goods

2973. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has constituted five working groups and three